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have given her the high place among the cultured nations of the world that she now occupies. Not only does it encourage the production of valuable and useful books at a moderate price, but it also insures their distribution in the quarters where they will be of service to those who need them most.

In England (and America) a book has to depend either upon the fancy of the general public, in which case the matter has to be diluted to suit the general ignorance, or upon the support of a small special clientele, which necessitates a very high published price. This price at once puts such books beyond the reach of the provincial student. He cannot buy them, and the local library is certain not to possess them.

It is useless to deny that the public libraries of England (and America), with perhaps a dozen exceptions, mostly the result of private gifts, are worthless for all serious study. Considering the education of our municipal bodies, we cannot be surprised if disheartened librarians do not trouble to cater for real workers, but devote themselves to the amusement of the class which reads novels and cheap magazines. France probably would fare no better were it not for the intelligent action of a Ministry which makes a point of removing the grave obstacle to natural progress.

Two magnificent volumes by M. Louis Gonse on the provincial museums of France are an object lesson of what can be achieved by this sensible system. They are written by one of the most enthusiastic and broad-minded of French critics. They are magnificently illustrated with more than seven hundred illustrations in the text, and nearly a hundred large photogravure plates, and the cost is £2 a volume. In England they could hardly be produced at five times the price.



A unique arts and crafts exhibition in the line of art metal work is now on view in the large gallery of the Tilden-Thurber Company, Providence, R. I. This exhibit is made by Norman and Ernest Spittle, of Birmingham, England, artists and practical workers in iron, steel, copper, brass and pewtal for architectural, ecclesiastical and decorative purposes, and comprises the best and most artistic work of the kind to be found in this country. Indeed, it is the first exhibition of the firm to be made in this country, Tilden-Thurber Company being the representative of the firm here.

The collection includes ecclesiastical metal work, fire screens and fireplace fittings, electroliers and standard lamps and hanging lamps in both modern and antique styles and finishes, tea trays and coal hods, or "coal vases," as they are called by the English; umbrella jars and clocks and candlesticks and tankards and any number of odd and beautiful articles designed by artists employed for the purpose. The dictum that all useful things should be made beautiful has evidently been borne in mind by the designers of these artistic objects. They are developed in natural copper, wrought iron, armor steel, bronze and pewtal, and are made entirely by hand, by the artist-craftsman of England. There is a fire screen in natural copper, with a design of a dragon on the surface of the screen, which is framed in wrought iron. Another screen is in the new art metal ware, known as pewtal, a gray-white metal combining the beautiful color of old pewter with the strength and lightness of aluminum. This screen has three leaves, the centre leaf being a design of a peacock on a blue background, the whole effect being exceedingly artistic, while the peculiar qualities of the ware insure its durability.

A quaint hanging lamp is developed in copper, with small panes of glass divided by bands of the metal. A heavy chain serves to hang it by. Then there is a wall lantern in brass, and

table lamps with brass shades, and unique and beautiful designs in candlesticks and electroliers. A novelty in standard lamps is a newell post lantern in armor steel, which is exceedingly decorative. One of the most beautiful pieces in the whole display is a Pompeiian vase in old copper, hammered out entirely by hand. It is embellished with three bands, ornamented with conventionalized floral design, and has a handle of armor. Then there are photograph frames in brass or copper, decorated with floral designs; cigar boxes in armor plate, with straps of copper, and many odd and beautiful objects for the decoration of the "house beautiful."



### THE IMPRESSIONISTS IN LONDON.

London, Feb. 16, 1905.

London is wondering. For some weeks we have had at the Grafton Galleries an exhibition of paintings of the Impressionists, brought together by M. Durand-Ruel, which has at least set all the art writers agog. Their criticisms are a revelation, an echo of the antagonistic clamor made some thirty years ago when these bold, new-fangled painters were first introduced, and the naivete of some of the recensions makes one think that London only now has made a discovery. The reading of the fulminations by such men as Claude Phillips, Humphrey Ward and others is curiously interesting. The *Athenum* critic is the fairest and gives evidence of having followed art history outside of his little island during the past generation. He proves it by the commendable condescension wherewith he says: "The reproach that the great men of the movement were charlatans or incapables can no longer be levelled at them. No intelligent person can any longer have doubts as to the sincerity of the apostles of Impressionism." And for this much we are grateful.

The collection is probably the most complete showing ever made of the men of the *plein air* school. It is limited to nine painters, three of whom, Degas, Monet and Renoir are still living, the other six painters are dead. They are: Boudin, Cezanne, Manet, Berthe, Morisot, Pissarro and Sisley. The selection was a wise one, as these are the personalities which may be regarded as the first and foremost of the cult.

But is it a cult, a momentary freak of fashion, a passing period in art? The art expression of these painters who revolted against the Romanticists, was to bring greater subjectivity in painting, to avoid known types, to evolve new methods to express on canvas what scarcely ever had been attempted before, the wealth of color in a dissecting atmosphere. The results have been startling, but the knowledge, the experience, the technical skill are the solid foundations on which the *peinture claire* rests, and there is no speculation as to the chances of its survival.

The appreciation of the work of Degas, the greatest of the masters, is most pronounced when the derision is remembered wherewith his work was originally seen. He may not yet have conquered London, but he has at least gained ground in securing serious consideration. His thirty-five examples, ballet girls, washerwomen, and the early subjects of the race-course always give him opportunity to express strikingly how beautiful the brush may model. His drawing is classical—what could we expect from one who was taught by the classicist Ingres? But Degas has more, he had the beauty of composition, the beauty of atmosphere, and here and there, a change of pitch or tone of color obtains for him wonderful harmony.

Monet is most amply represented by fifty-five canvases. His earliest work is not shown, although some examples are seen which show the skilful draughtsmanship of the artist. But the luminous splendor, the delicacy of handling his material, the deftness wherewith the transitory effects of nature are caught—it all shows the astonishing mastery in depicting ephemeral changes of light, sun and smoke, haze and coruscating brilliancy.

Manet shows his Prado days in many a canvas which reminds of his studies of the great Spaniards. He is a thoroughly serious painter, with a magic brush which gives as much care to still life as the old masters gave to Madonnas and Saints.

Camille Pissarro has forty-five canvases allotted in the exhibition. They are consistent throughout, whether he devotes himself to actuality as in his Statue of Henry IV or dips into the vein of poetry like the views at Bazincourt and Pontoise.